DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 404 634 CS 012 734

AUTHOR Hertz-Lazarowitz, Rachel; Schaedel, Bruria
TITLE Success for All in Acre, Israel: Effects on Hebrew and Arabic Reading and Writing. (First Year).
PUB DATE Mar 97
NOTE 6p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, March 24-28, 1997).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Comparative Analysis; Cross Cultural Studies; Elementary Education; Foreign Countries; Program Effectiveness; *Reading Achievement; *Reading Comprehension; Reading Readiness; Reading Research; Sex Differences; *Writing Achievement; Writing Research
IDENTIFIERS *Israel; *Success for All Program

ABSTRACT

A study investigated the effectiveness of the Success for All (SFA) program developed at Johns Hopkins University. The program emphasizes prevention of failure, personal tutoring, family-school program, and regular evaluation of student progress. In 1996, the program involved schools in northern Israel--Arabic and Jewish, religious and secular. Subjects of the study were 211 students at 3 Jewish schools and 66 students in 2 comparison schools, and 69 Arab children in SFA schools and 67 Arab children in comparison schools. Subjects completed the Shatil Readiness Test, a reading comprehension test, and a writing test. Preliminary results indicated that: (1) Jewish children scored higher on subscales of reading readiness than Arabs, and Arab children scored higher than Jewish children on other subscales; (2) Jewish students surpassed Arab children on all subscales of the reading comprehension test; (3) children from low socioeconomic background, which were most of the SFA students, were similar in their writing achievement of children from more advantaged backgrounds; (4) Arab girls gained the most from SFA and were much closer in their achievements to the Jewish girls; and (5) Jewish boys received the highest writing achievement scores--their stories were evaluated as being better than the girls' writing. (Contains three references and three tables of data.) (RS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 404 634

SUCCESS FOR ALL IN ACRE, ISRAEL: EFFECTS ON HEBREW AND ARABIC READING AND WRITING

(First Year)

International Adaptation of Success for All

AERA Meeting
Chicago
March 24-28 ,1997

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
R. Hertz - Lazarowitz
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Prof. Rachel Hertz-Lazarowitz
e-mail: rachelhl@construct.haifa.ac.il
Dr. Bruria Schaedel

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

AS012734

Rachel Hertz-Lazarowitz Bruria Schaedel and Michal Lerner
Haifa University, Israel

Success for All in Acre: Effects on Hebrew and Arabic reading and writing

Success For All (SFA) is an innovative learning environment focused on children's academic success from early schooling. The program emphasizes prevention of failure, personal tutoring, family-school program, and regular evaluation of student progress.

SFA strives to assure a competent level of reading and writing and works to enhance literacy development from kindergarten until the end of elementary school.

The program was developed at John Hopkins University (Slavin and colleagues, 1994) and it demands pedagogical and organizational intervention processes.

SFA was adopted and implemented in Israel for the first time in Acre - a mixed city of Jews and Arabs in Northern Israel.

In 1994 a holistic-wide SFA program was offered to the city of Acre by presenting its principals to several schools.

In 1995, SFA was implemented in five elementary schools: two religious and two secular Jewish schools and one Arabic school. Most of the schools are defined by the Ministry of Education as disadvantaged schools.

In 1996, the program comprises eight schools (Arabic and Jewish - religious and secular). Three additional schools serve as comparison. Six (out of the eight) schools implementing SFA in first and second grade also implement Cooperative Learning in Literacy (ALASH) in their higher grades (third through sixth).

At the beginning of the school year (September, 1996) all of the Arabic kindergartens have joined a pre SFA program.

SFA from its initial steps has been accompanied by in-service teacher training on a regular basis once in two weeks, and also by research evaluation of reading and writing development at the beginning and end of the school year.

Reading readiness test* description

At the beginning of the school year children from five Jewish schools - three implementing SFA (n=211) and two comparison schools (n=66) and Arab children from the same school - 2 classes implementing SFA (n=69) and two comparison classes (n=67) were tested on a revised Shatil Readiness Test. The test was administrated individually and took about 40 minutes.

The test developed by Shatil was based on a definition of reading made by Hoover & Gough (1992). They stated that reading is composed of two components: decoding skill and language comprehension . Thus, the tasks of the test were designed to predict reading competence according to both components.

1. *language comprehension* - this section comprised four tasks: listening comprehension - in this task the child was asked to listen to a story and then answer 12 questions syntactic awareness - in which the child had to correct 21 syntactically wrong sentences concepts of print - checked the child's ability to understand 16 basic concepts about book reading vocabulary test - the child was asked to explain the meaning of 26 individual words read to him by the examiner.
2. *decoding* - this section asked the child to turn letters to sounds in four different tasks: Short Term Memory - in which the child had to repeat 20 nonsense words of differing length Psuedoword repetition - the task comprised 20 psuedowords the child had to repeat after the examiner letter naming - the child had to name 14 letters presented on a card syllabic learning - the child had to learn meaningless signs which represented three different syllables. The Arab students were not tested on this task because it was too difficult to be translated and adapted to Arabic.

1

Reading readiness test results

Table 1 depicts the range and means of the Jewish and Arab sample

Table 1 - Mean and Std. D of Jewish and Arab students

Variable	Range	Jews N=277		Arabs N=136	
		Mean	Std. D	Mean	Std. D
Sentence Correction	0 - 21	4.89	2.48	1.51	1.94
Listening Comprehension	0 - 12	7.60	2.46	8.65	2.47
Concepts of Print	0 - 16	8.56	3.24	8.07	3.64
Vocabulary	0 - 26	8.92	3.55	11.24	4.55
Short Term Memory	0 - 20	9.84	3.00	10.01	3.05
Letter naming	0 - 14	7.32	4.14	3.28	3.54
Syllabic Learning	0 - 21	12.70	5.39	8.63	5.63
Psuedoword Repetition	0 - 20	16.43	3.21	-	-

Table 1 indicated a higher mean score of the Jewish sample in some of the subscales while the Arabs scored higher in others. There were salient differences on subscales of: sentence correction, letter naming and syllabic learning in favor of the Jewish students. This finding can be explained by the adaptation done for the first time in Israel of readiness test (aimed at a Jewish population) to an Arabic sample; Adaptation which might not have captured all the cultural nuances of the Arabs.
It was also found that within the Jewish sample religious children scored on average higher than children learning in secular schools.

Reading comprehension test description

At the end of the school year Shatil developed a test to examine children's reading comprehension skill. The test was administrated collectively to the whole class. The students were asked to read the tasks silently and circle the correct answer. Only the instructions were read aloud by the examiner and explained; the teachers were instructed not to help the children read the texts.
In the Jewish sample seven schools participated in the evaluation - five of the pre-test and two additional comparison schools. In the Arabic school all of the classes took the test.
The test included three sections:

1. *Sentence Comprehension* - the child was asked to read a sentence and circle the correct inference of it. In this section 8 sentences were included.
2. *Scrutiny of Comprehension* - this task consisted of a story in which one sentence was unrelated to the rest. The child was instructed to underline it.
3. *Story Comprehension* - In this section were three short stories followed by questions about the text. The child had to circle the correct answer. Each story was followed by 3 - 4 questions.

Reading comprehension test results

Table 2 - Mean and Std. Dev of Jewish and Arab students

Variable	Range	Jews N=395 Mean	Arabs N=208 Mean
Sentence Comprehension	0 - 8	6.69	4.47
Scrutiny of Comprehension	0 - 2	1.36	0.63
Story Comprehension	0 - 11	8.05	6.15
Total Score	0 - 21	16.1	11.52

Table 2 indicates that the Jewish students surpassed the Arabs in all the subscales measured.
This finding may result from translation of the test to Arabic,which might have not considered many of the cultural and linguistic differences between the languages.

The impact of SFA

The data are still in process of analysis. An overview of school ranking in pre-post comparison reveal school differences related to quality of implementation. It was found that schools implementing SFA more consistently gained higher scores than the comparison sample even though they were defined as more disadvantageous schools.

Writing test description

At the end of the school the children were also assessed on their writing skill. The writing task was administrated collectively to the whole class.
In the Jewish sample implementimg SFA were 180 students and in the comparison schools 53 students. 66 Arabs were in the SFA group and 61 in the comparison.
The writing task asked the children to compose a story book based on four pictures which the student received in an envelope; most of them pasted the pictures and wrote according to them a story in sequence. (There was no right order by which the pictures had to be arranged)
A group of experts developed criteria for assessing the children's stories. These criteria included 19 points of reference which were scored according to their importance to the story construction.
These measures were divided to three major categories by a cluster analysis:

1. **Story quality** - which included all the criteria related to story content (e.g. text complexity ; plot development; originality; language being used). Overall 9 measures were clustered under this category and were scored to a maximum of 70 points.
2. **Writing conventions** - this cluster included all the measures related to technical writing skill (e.g. spacing between words; graphomotoric ability; readability of the text). 7 measures were clustered under this category and were scored to a maximum of 25 points.

Literacy awareness - under this cluster were grouped all the measures related to external structure of a book (e.g. writing an author's name; giving a name to the story). 3 measures were included in this category and were scored to a maximum of 5 points.

Writing test results

Table 3 - Mean and Std. Deviation of Story Measures

	Boys		Girls	
Writing Measure	SFA N=89	comparison N=26	SFA N=91	comparison N=27
Story quality	40.83 (11.08)	46.23 (7.26)	39.15 (11.22)	37.44 (9.21)
Writing conventions	20.49 (4.35)	21.31 (3.77)	20.97 (3.39)	20.85 (3.38)
Literacy awareness	2.66 (1.31)	2.31 (1.72)	2.90 (1.43)	2.85 (1.17)
Total score	73.99 (13.30)	79.85 (9.32)	73.02 (12.75)	71.15 (10.34)

The impact of SFA

Table 3 indicates a salient difference between boys in the SFA and the comparison group on story quality measure while girls in both groups were much closer in their mean score.
On the other two measures no significant differences were found.
It was also found that Children from low socioeconomic background , which were most of the SFA students, were similar in their writing achievement to children from more advantaged background.
In the Arab group SFA contributed to greater achievements in significant measures of story writing - quality of story, print awareness and total score.
The Arab girls gained the most from SFA and were much closer in their achievements to the Jewish girls.
The Jewish boys got the highest scores - their stories were evaluated as better than the girls' writing.

References

Hertz-Lazarowitz, R., Lerner, M, & Shadel, B.(1996). Story related writing in coopertive learning classroom. *Helkat Lashon: The Israeli Journal of Linguistic Education, 23,* 205-231.

Hoover, W.A., & Gough, P.B. (1992). The simple view of reading. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 2,* 127-160.

Slavin, R.E.., Madden, N.A., Dolan, L.J., Wasik, B.A. Ross, S.M., & Smith, L.J. (1994). "Whenever and wherever we choose: The replication of Success for All. *Phi Delta Kappan, 75,* 639-647.